

Message Text

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ACTION AF-01

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FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO USINFO WASHDC

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USIAC

MEDIA REACTION FOR IOR/M, IAA

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION: BENIN POSITION ON WESTERN SAHARA

1. "EHUZU", THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED (AND ONLY) NEWSPAPER OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN, THURSDAY CARRIED A LONG AVYOUNT OF THE LIBYAN AND CUBAN ADDRESSES TO THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE. ENTITLED "NUMEROUS DELEGATES DEMAND THE SUPPRESSION OF THE RIGHT OF VETO IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL", THE ARTICLE APPEARS TO BE AN AFP (OR OTHER WIRE-SERVICE) ITEM GIVING A FAIRLY STRAIGHT-FORWARD REPORT, BUT ENDING WITH TWO PARAGRAPHS BEARING ALL THE MARKS OF LOCAL EDITORIALIZATION.

2. NOTING THAT THE POLITICAL COMMISSION WORKED UNTIL THREE O'CLOCK TUESDAY MORNING TRYING TO FIND A "FORMULA FOR COMPROMISE ON THE MOST TROUBLING QUESTIONS, NOTABLY THE WESTERN SAHARA QUESTION", THE NEWSPAPER GOES ON: "IT IS MORE PRECISELY THE QUESTION OF FINDING A SYNTHESIS BETWEEN TWO RESOLUTIONS: ONE FAVORABLE TO THE COLONIALIST MOROCCAN THESIS PRESENTED BY SAUDI ARABIA; THE OTHER WHICH REVERTS TO THE ALGERIAN POSITION, AND WHICH WAS REGISTERED BY BENIN, ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE AND BURUNDI".

3. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES, "THE FIRST ABSTAINS, OF COURSE,
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FROM SPEAKING OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE, WHEREAS THE SECOND

REAFFIRMS THE "RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE
OF THE PEOPLE OF WESTERN SAHARA".
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